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DEPT FOR EUR/AGS, NEA/IR, T, AND ISN/RA

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [MNUC](#) [KNNP](#) [IR](#) [SZ](#)

SUBJECT: SWISS REACTION TO NIE ON IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

REF: STATE 162558

Classified By: Ambassador Peter R. Coneway; reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (C) Ambassador delivered the message in reftel on December 4 to MFA Middle East Affairs Division Chief Livia Leu (Note: Ambassador Leu represented State Secretary Ambuehl, who was unexpectedly called to a meeting with FM Calmy-Rey. End Note). Leu expressed the Swiss government's appreciation for the briefing on the NIE and USG views on the way forward in dealing with Iran's nuclear program. She provided an initial Swiss reaction and passed a copy of her talking points (text in para 2) to the Ambassador for our reference.

12. (S) BEGIN SWISS MFA TALKING POINTS:

- Very interesting document. It will possibly contribute to the de-escalation of the situation and influence the future deliberations.

- It goes in the same direction as our assessment: Although we do not know what the exact ultimate objective of Iran's nuclear program is, we assess -- with moderate confidence -- that Iran wants to become a "nuclear threshold country" whereas we do not know where the threshold will be put.

- This new analysis will be welcomed by Iran. The Iranians will most likely underline that there is now even less legitimacy for sanctions and for Security Council involvement, as the non-military nature of its program is "proven". The paper undermines arguments for military strikes against Iran.

-- The main question remains: How to deal with the Iranian program?

- Switzerland remains convinced that negotiations should begin as soon as possible. From our point of view, we would propose to either:

-- a) Organize direct confidential U.S.-Iranian talks. Switzerland is ready to facilitate them, if so desired;

or

-- b) Agree on symmetric confidence building measures in order to start the negotiation on an overall package without preconditions.

END SWISS MFA TALKING POINTS.

13. (S) In response, the Ambassador reiterated the message in reftel, emphasizing that the USG believes the NIE confirms the approach we have taken thus far, maintaining pressure on

Iran while keeping the P5 1 offer on the table -- with the imperative that Iran meet its obligation to suspend its enrichment-related activities as a precondition for negotiations with the P5 1. (Comment: The Swiss proposals to facilitate "direct confidential U.S.-Iranian talks" or to promote "negotiation on an overall package without preconditions" are recurring, troublesome themes in Swiss MFA thinking. We will continue to emphasize to the Swiss that there already is a well-developed, broadly supported "proposal" for a diplomatic solution, as embodied by the P5 1 offer -- which we would expect the GOS also should strongly support. End Comment)

CONEWAY